

JOHN J. FASO
19TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

1616 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-5614

<http://faso.house.gov>



Congress of the United States
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June 14, 2017

Hon. Kathleen H. Burgess
Secretary to the Commission
New York State Public Service Commission
Empire State Plaza
Agency Building 3
Albany, NY 12223

RE: Case # 17-C-0050, FairPoint Communications, Inc and Consolidated Communications Inc.

Secretary Burgess:

I urge the Public Service Commission (PSC) to evaluate the petition jointly filed by Consolidated Communications Holdings, Inc (CCH) and FairPoint Communications, Inc. (FCI) for approval of the CCH plan to acquire FCI in New York. During this evaluation process, the PSC should condition approval of the application on the commitment of CCH and FCI to continue their Phase 2 broadband buildout.

As noted in the petition, a merger of these two companies will help expand access to high-speed broadband service to one of the most underserved areas in the state. By combining \$36.7 million in New NY Broadband Program Phase 2 grant funding with private investment, CCH and FCI will have the ability to provide modern broadband technology to thousands of residents in Upstate New York.

The public comments in my district during hearings held by the PSC clearly demonstrate that there is an incredible demand for fast and reliable broadband service. Our modern economy relies on increased access to support businesses, schools, libraries, and homeowners. Ensuring CCH and FCI continue their commitment will go a long way to closing the digital divide in this area of my district.

I appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

John J. Faso
Member of Congress

DELHI DISTRICT OFFICE
111 MAIN STREET
DELHI, NY 13753
PHONE: (607) 746-9537

KINDERHOOK DISTRICT OFFICE
2 HUDSON STREET
PO Box 775
KINDERHOOK, NY 12106
PHONE: (518) 610-8133

KINGSTON DISTRICT OFFICE
721 BROADWAY
KINGSTON, NY 12401
PHONE: (845) 514-2322